How much can really change in just eight weeks? If you are part of Tri-C's Women in Transition program, the answer is “everything.”

Women in Transition (WIT), marking its 35th anniversary this year, is a free, eight-week noncredit program that provides information, support and referrals to women who are in a transitional time in their lives. The College enthusiastically celebrated WIT's latest successful session during the spring graduation ceremony Thursday at the Metropolitan Campus.

With a theme of "Access, Progress and Success," the rousing ceremony saluted 75 graduates and included inspirational words from staff, graduates and keynote speaker Dr. Patricia Rowell, an avid supporter of the program. Dr. Rowell, who will retire as Western Campus president June 30, wiped away tears as she spoke about her passion for the program and her pride in the women who have come through it.

Dr. Rowell reminded the graduates to not fall victim to the “imposter syndrome,” the fear that you don’t belong or won’t fit in when you take on a new challenge. Instead, she advised, “Hold your head up and take your place.”

Program assistant Kendra Willis briefed the audience on WIT’s history and mission. From its roots as a federally funded pilot project known as the Displaced Homemakers program, it has evolved into a year-round, multi-faceted program completely supported by grants. Among the topics tackled during each eight-week session on the Eastern, Metropolitan and Western campuses: career exploration, stress management, time management and even issues such as domestic violence. WIT is not limited to Tri-C students. In fact, many of the women earn GEDs and post-secondary degrees after completing the program.

"By the time you leave the program, you have a road map," Willis said. “Because we’re not just women in transition, we’re women on the move.”
Several speakers, including student speaker Teameka Weaver, stressed the importance of staying connected with WIT after graduation. Weaver frequently returned to her campus WIT office to study because of the positive atmosphere and as a reminder of her personal progress. Tiffany Wilder also stayed connected after finishing the program; today she is a WIT program assistant.

To help keep that connection, a new program, Women in Transition II, is coming soon. WIT II will give program alumni and staff the chance to share events and success stories at monthly meetings on campus.